CLAIMS

1. A system, comprising:

a) items of merchandise in a rack, each bearing a unique code;

b) means for generating the codes, and delivering a duplicate of each code to a different remote location; and

c) means for

   i) receiving a duplicate from a person who transported the duplicate from a remote location, and

   ii) reading the code from an item of merchandise.

2. System according to claim 1, wherein the means of paragraph (c) sounds a warning if the codes do not match.

3. A method of delivering items of merchandise to customers, comprising the following steps:

a) maintaining items of merchandise in a rack, each bearing a unique code;

b) when generating the codes, delivering a duplicate of each code to a different remote location; and

c) at a station,

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i) receiving a duplicate from a person,

ii) reading the code from an item of merchandise, and

iii) sounding a warning if the codes do not match.

4. Method of operating a restaurant, comprising the following steps:

a) maintaining a web page on the Internet;

b) taking orders for food items on the web page and issuing identifying codes to persons placing the orders;

c) preparing food in accordance with the orders;

d) placing prepared orders in a bay, each labeled with a respective identifying code;

e) without human intervention at a check out station,

i) reading an identifying code from an order;

ii) accepting an identifying code from a person;

iii) comparing the codes and,

A) if they do not match, causing an alarm; and

B) if they do match, accepting payment without causing an alarm.

5. Method of operating a restaurant, comprising the

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following steps:

a) accepting a message from a customer located outside the restaurant, which identifies food items to be packaged;

b) packaging the identified food items into packages;

c) attaching one or more labels to the packages, which indicate

    i) in machine-readable format, price of the food items,

    ii) in human-readable format, the name of the customer;

d) placing the labeled packages into a bay for retrieval by customers;

e) allowing customers to retrieve the packages from the bay;

f) accepting a retrieved package from a customer at a non-staffed checkout station and, at the station,

    i) reading a price from the machine-readable label.

6. Method according to claim 5, and further comprising the step of obtaining payment from the customer at the non-staffed checkout station.